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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: U.S.-TAIWAN RELATIONS, SOUTH KOREAN  
PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

11. Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused news coverage December 20 on Lee Myung-bak's victory in South Korea's presidential election Wednesday; on Taiwan's Central Election Commission's insistence on the "one-step" voting format for the 2008 legislative election; and on the controversial organic law of Taiwan's National Communications Commission. The centrist, KMT-leaning "China Times" ran a banner headline on page five that said "The United States Opposes the UN Referendum; [U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza] Rice Is Reportedly to Go into Action to Pressure [Taiwan]."

12. In terms of editorials and commentaries, an op-ed in the pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" alleged that State Department officials "seem to have made another secret deal with China to limit and control democracy and freedom of Taiwan." The article also criticized U.S. policy on Taiwan and China as being "vacuous, vague and vapid." With regard to South Korea's presidential elections, an editorial in the pro-unification "United Daily News" discussed the enlightenment of such an election for Taiwan. A commentary in the mass-circulation "Apple Daily" also discussed "dirty tricks" in the South Korean presidential election. A "China Times" op-ed commented on the result of the South Korean presidential election, saying the conservative influence in South Korea has revived. End summary.

### 13. U.S.-Taiwan Relations

"Those Underhanded Secret Deals"

Jerome Keating, a Taiwan-based writer, opined in the pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" [circulation: 30,000] (12/20):

"The more they protest, the more time and verbiage they expend and the more they insist that they respect Taiwan's democracy, the more obvious it becomes. The US State Department, its officials and henchmen seem to have made another secret deal with China to limit and control the democracy and freedom of Taiwan. ... Any rational person must wonder at the overkill, concern and effort to clarify ad nauseam that the US cares deeply about Taiwan's democracy -- except that it doesn't want Taiwan to practice it. The issue is Taiwan's UN referendum, a referendum that everyone agrees will have no binding power or consequence. So why all the effort? Shades of US secretary of state Henry Kissinger, the sellout king par excellence: Has the US made another secret deal with China and let China define the terms? ...

"Can anyone clearly state what the US is obligated to do regarding Taiwan and the 'status quo'? Can anyone clearly state what China is obligated to do regarding Taiwan and the 'status quo'? The burden only falls on Taiwan and evidence shows that this burden comes from a secret deal that Taiwan was not privy to. US policy on Taiwan and China is vacuous, vague and vapid. It has purposely been kept this

way for more than half a century so that no one can clearly define the US' obligations. China, on the other hand, has always insisted that it has no obligations except the right to declare war when it feels offended and that it can move the goal posts that determine what offends it when it so pleases. That so much effort has been expended over such minutiae as Taiwan's UN referendum can only point to one thing: a secret deal with China in which the US contains Taiwan in the ways and minutiae that China wants Taiwan contained.  
...

"Burghardt's message ended with the words that new leaders present a new opportunity to solve problems on important issues. He did not want Chen to cause problems for his successor. It is no wonder that the US shows favoritism for wishy-washy KMT presidential candidate Ma Ying-jeou, who is also China's favorite in the upcoming elections. However, the US is also going to have a new leadership soon. Will its new president be bound by the secret deals of the past? Will he or she have a new opportunity to solve problems and deal with the important issues of the Taiwan Strait in a new way? Will we even see some new faces in the State Department?"

#### 14. South Korean Presidential Election

A) "Incompetent Ruling Party Falls from Power -- the Enlightenment of South Korea's Presidential Election for Taiwan"

The pro-unification "United Daily News" [circulation: 400,000] editorialized (12/20):

"Despite the joint suppression launched by South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun and other rivals prior to the election, Lee Myung-bak still won a landslide victory Wednesday. This result conveyed a clear message: the people of South Korea have decided wholeheartedly to remove its incompetent ruling party, and no tricks or moves could shake their determination. ...  
PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

"Under such circumstances, the indifferent atmosphere which prevailed during the campaigns, however, indicated a special kind of calm. The fact that Roh Moo-hyun, who has a law degree, was removed and replaced by Lee, who used to be a 'manager,' reflects two psychological changes in South Korean society. First, the obsession with 'regionalism' that has dominated South Korea's politics for years has greatly declined following transfers of power over the past decade. Second, the [South Korean] people's expectations for politics have transformed from a strong belief in symbols and ideology to the practical pursuit of economic development and livelihood. This phenomenon of 'abatement in the political fever' is an essential process for the maturation of democracy. ..."

B) "Dirty Political Tricks in South Korea"

Columnist Antonio Chiang wrote in his column in the mass-circulation "Apple Daily" [circulation: 520,000] (12/20):

"In the history of South Korea, Lee Myung-bak is the first elected president who has the background of an entrepreneur. His election signifies that the Korean people of the new generation have grown tired of confrontational politics. Even though Lee won a landslide victory in the presidential election, he is still required to be probed by special prosecutors in his capacity as president-elect. This is an unprecedented situation in Seoul's constitutional history, so it is expected that South Korea's political situation will stay chaotic in the [near] future. ..."

C) "South Korea Again Calls Back Conservatism"

Tsai Zheng-jia, an assistant research fellow at the Institute of

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International Relations of National Chengchi University, opined in the centrist, KMT-leaning "China Times" [circulation: 400,000] (12/20):

"... From the political science point of view in interpreting [the result of the South Korean presidential election], the election of opposition Grand National Party candidate Lee Myung-bak represents

the second change of government in South Korea. South Korea has come out of the infant stage of democracy and has formally become a mature democratic country. From the economic point of view, the election of Lee Myung-bak, a former Hyundai CEO, also represents the landslide victory of the "influence of industrialization." South Korea formally steps into [the ranks of] industrialized countries. ..."

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